



Washington State Department of Agriculture News Release

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WSDA fines Lynden dairy farmer for manure spill

OLYMPIA – A Lynden dairy farmer has been fined \$4,500 for violating the state Water Pollution Control Act.

The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) cited Rob Heerspink, of Edaleen Dairy LLC, for two separate incidents of manure runoff from his dairy in May. He was fined \$1,500 for a mechanical problem on May 4 and 5, which resulted in more than 20,000 gallons of manure running into Double Ditch. The ditch flows into a tributary of the Nooksack River.

Heerspink also was fined \$3,000 for a May 28 spill, which occurred when between 1,000 and 8,000 gallons of manure from an overtopped lagoon flowed into a nearby field and into Double Ditch.

The fines were issued through WSDA's Livestock Nutrient Management Program, which the state Legislature transferred from the state Department of Ecology to WSDA in July 2003. This is the fourth and fifth fine the agency has issued since assuming responsibility for the program.

"On both occasions Mr. Heerspink responded quickly to stop the runoff," said Kirk Robinson, lead dairy nutrient inspector for the Livestock Nutrient Management Program. "And he's taken steps to prevent the problems from occurring in the future. However, both spills resulted in a significant discharge into nearby waters."

Heerspink has two options to contest the penalty: he can either submit a written explanation why the department should reduce or cancel the fine or he can file an appeal with the Pollution Control Hearings Board.

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